

Case TIE-003PA

REMARKS

Claims 1-26 were pending in the application. Independent claims 1 and 17 have been amended as set forth above. No claims have been added or cancelled. Thus, claims 1-26 are subject to continued examination.

ART REJECTIONS:

All claims stand rejected as being anticipated by or obvious over U.S. Patent 3,717,150 to Schwartz either standing alone or in combination with various secondary references. Continued rejection on these grounds is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested.

As set forth at MPEP §2131, a claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described in a single prior art reference. Thus, the identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the claim. Likewise, in order to support an obviousness rejection, the prior art must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. As best understood, these standards are not satisfied by the art of record with regard to the claims as currently presented.

Independent claims 1 and 17 both claim the step of mechanically shrinking the preliminary stitch bonded composite in at least the length dimension corresponding to the machine direction of the textile structure by introduction of mechanical compression. Mechanical shrinking using mechanical compression is disclosed in the original application at pages 10-12. It is respectfully submitted that use of the term "mechanical" must be given weight in the interpretation of the claim and that such mechanical shrinking is clearly distinguishable from washing and drying induced shrinkage as taught by the cited Schwartz reference. In order to provide still further positive distinction from washing and drying induced shrinkage, the

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independent claims have been amended to recite that the mechanical compression is introduced in the machine direction using textile compaction equipment. As best understood, such a mechanical process is in no way taught or suggested by the art of record.

Conclusion:

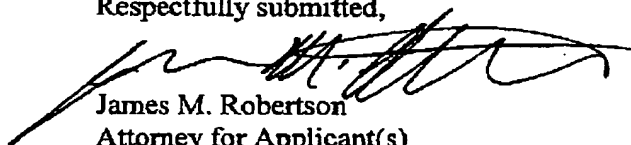
For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request the reconsideration and withdrawal of all outstanding rejections and that all claims be passed to issue.

Should any issues remain after consideration of this Amendment and accompanying Remarks, the Examiner is invited and encouraged to telephone the undersigned in the hope that any such issue may be promptly and satisfactorily resolved.

A request/petition for a one (1) month extension of time accompanies this paper. In the event that additional time is required to have these papers considered timely, Applicants hereby petition for any additional time as may be required. Authorization is hereby granted to withdraw any extension fees or other fees necessary for acceptance of this paper from our Deposit Account No. 50-1424.

Respectfully submitted,

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